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implied), and he repeated the word over and over, until this led us to talk about singing, and at last we had them consent to dance susa for us. It had to be done very quietly, in the slight clearing in back of the shelter. Susa is an African dance. It is danced by men only, in pairs, and is something of a game. The one who wins "kills" his opponent. The earth spirits are said especially to like it, and it is danced in the fields or in the villages for them.

There they stood, Yamati and Sabape, facing each other, their enlarged navels almost touching. One agreed to be "in," and one "out," and as they began, their jaws came forward in a patterned, pugnacious way, and their arms moved to reproduce in pantomime shield and spear, while the feet crossed and recrossed.

Kesi-kesi g'a S'sa
Zond'o linga
Linga-li

The monkeys
Go to dance susa
Without rings.

Huh, huh, huh!

They sang the song over and over again, panting at the end of each verse to dramatize combat.

"I killed him," said Yamati. He had won, and they began again. If the one who had agreed to be "in" had his foot on the outside as they clashed, then he lost—he was killed.

4

As they were dancing, we noticed a young man we had never seen before. He was standing watching the youngsters at their play, smiling as though he enjoyed their contest. He was very dark, even for a Bush Negro, short and stocky, with unusual muscular development of arm and chest and thigh. His age, one would judge, was nineteen or twenty. He turned his smile on us when he realized we were noticing him.

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439 "I heard that you are buying things we make, as you did last year in my village. I have come with balata from my uncle, and I brought a stool to sell. Would you like to see it?"

And so Bayo brought us his stool. It was not well carved. Indeed, compared with even the least skilled carvings on benches and combs and trays and food-stirring paddles, the workmanship was crude. But one does not refuse a proffered article bruskly, and we sat down to talk with him about it.

531 322 It was Bayo who gave us our first insight into the meaning of Bush Negro designs, gave us our first information about this, as about so many other customs and practices. What is carved on the wood which the men work with such care has significance, and carries meaningful symbols which the Bush Negro is unwilling to reveal. That there might be symbolism in the art we had before suspected, but usually, when we asked, we heard the skillful evasions of which the Bush Negro is master. He did not know. Only the carver himself could say, but the carver was away or long dead. Or we would hear that it was carving, that it was carved to beautify it, that it was of an in-and-out design. Or, with carefully pointing finger that indicated the ornamentation, the Bush Negro would say, "This is wood."

531 So we talked to Bayo about his stool, expecting to hear one of the usual replies. But this time and without any urging we heard what we had so long wondered about. "Look," he said, tracing out the lines of the interwoven pattern, "this is a man, this a woman. This is her head, those her breasts, this her womb. Here are his head, his arms, his legs. We call this *womi-ko-muyε*—man-and-woman. Here are the children which they will make," and his hands traced another series of designs on the top of the stool.

439 989 We bought his stool, and he stayed and talked of many things. Did we want to buy an *obia*—a charm? One day he would like to become an obia man. Already he could make obias which protect the wearer when he walks on the water.

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WHILE THE RIVER WAS HIGH

Had we provided ourselves with the necessary obias with which to travel to the country of the Granman? He had never been so far up the river. He would like to go there. Ai-yo! He would like to go and see Dahomey, the sacred city, and look at the Tapa Wata falls, and visit the Granman's village. Did we have all our paddlers? He was strong, and he liked to make a boat walk up the rapids. He could get his father to come with him as steersman. His father had strong obias and knew the river. We could not go until the river went down, but he would stay with us here and wait, and if we wished it he would go back upstream to his village and get his father and food, and be ready for us in time. He needed the money the Bakra would pay, too, for he wanted to be married soon, and he would have to buy many things for his woman and her mother.

When he left us, he went to one of the little enclosed houses that were there for travelers, choosing the one closest to us, and built a small fire. His younger brother and the white dog that came in his boat sat with him. The dog wore a cord about his neck, covered with red ochre, to keep him safe in the bush. That night as we ate we could see Bayo, his brother, and the dog squatting close to the fire and eating, too. And all the next day, and for several days to come, as we waited, Bayo was with us, talking, laughing, explaining, and making and buying obias for us to carry us safely on our journey to the Granman.

5

In the afternoon one of the political chiefs of the neighboring Christian village came to hear our phonograph. But when we asked him to sing into it, he said, "Ask me later. Now I am alone. We Saramacca people never do anything when we are alone." We had the year before acquired a powerful obia against slander and bearing false witness against us, and found the occasion useful for corroborating the invocation we had been given. The man, however, spoke with the greatest reluctance and looked

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765 head was clearest in the quiet of the early morning. A stillness so pronounced that we could feel it surrounded us at the base camp, for at Gankwe the drums had been replaced in the shrines of the gods for whom they speak, and no more guns saluted the spirit of Zimbi, or warned away the evil dead with the powder which was distasteful to ghosts. Zimbi was buried, the grave diggers had bathed [183] and put on fresh loin cloths, the village had been purified, and all was still.

512 From our shelter, watching the haze lift, we could see that the river had fallen; the tangled grasses at the bank showed fully a hand's breadth of fresh brown that had the day before been under water. With the coming of the sun things began to stir. The lizards appeared, the [231] chickens came to peck at our shoes, looking for crumbs, and boats began to make shadows across the opposite bank, as the Gankwe women in their small corials went to their fields. At the bow would be a little girl, or a yet smaller [868] boy—as young as four perhaps, for the older ones went with the men to learn a man's work—helping to take the boat up the fast water. All this went on quietly, until we espied three boats running down the rapids and pivoting about in the still water toward our landing place. As they 438 came nearer, we could see that the boats carried no load, and our host, the director of the balata-collecting station, explained that these boats were new and were being taken down river for sale.

"All the large boats come from top-side," he said. "The men take them clear around to the Marowyne River by way of the canals and there carry loads in them to the stations in the interior. The Saramacca men are fine canoe-men. They like them on the Marowyne. . . . You could • 439 use a large boat for your trip up river. Maybe the man will sell one."

[142] The man in charge of the little flotilla stood more than [304] six feet tall. His face was intricately cicatrized, and he carried himself with a dignity and reserve that surpassed even the way of the village chiefs.

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Seeing him, our host gave an exclamation of pleasure. "But this is Ajako, the husband of Granman Yankuso's daughter!"

"*Kuma, Bakra. Kuma, Bakra muye*—Good morning, white man, good morning, white woman," he said, and our answer was, "*Ajako, kuma*—Ajako, good morning."

Had we awakened, no? This, in the Saramacca idiom, was how one asked if we were well, if we were alive, since the euphemism for death is sleep. We answered him in their patterned phrase.

"*Hafu so*," we said, using their equivalent for fairly well, only half so.

Ajako laughed. The white man had learned. "Are you no better? I hear the gods like you well," he replied.

And so the conversation went on, each giving account of himself.

Finally Ajako said, "Granman Yankuso waits for you, Bakra. He sends you his greetings, and says he will welcome you in Asindopo Lantiwe, his village. You have the freedom of the river. The village chiefs know of your coming. They will receive you. The river is not too high now, for top-side the rains are at an end. Here on the lower river, too, rocks that today are under water will appear tomorrow or the next day. The water is not too high now. The Granman sends word to you that you can start."

But what of him? Would he not come with us as our chief paddler, to show us the way through the many channels? But he smiled and said he was going to the Marowyne. He could not turn back, he told us, for he had the boats to sell, and money to earn there, while his wife was nursing her infant. When the child was seventeen, eighteen months old, then he would be back with his wife again, cutting new fields for her, and making children. While the infant was at the breast, he would be away working.

There was more talk, leading gently—*safri*, softly, as the Bush Negro himself says—to the subject of certain unfriendly villages. There were two of them up the river that

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had not acted well toward the Granman. It would be best if we did not stop there. At the others the Granman could assure us hospitality. Then there was talk of hauling wood and making rafts, for our host, who knew these people well, moved safri, too, until he at last felt the moment had come to talk about buying a boat from Ajako.

When the arrangements of the sale were concluded, Ajako came back to talk with us. He had heard that we had a machine which the Kromanti spirit had broken, was it true? Did it really go again? They said the Bakra had much cunning. They said the Bakra knew African magic.

The Bakra said he knew something about Africa. The Ashanti people, for instance, were a fine people.

"*Ma na Asante, na Sa'macca sem-* . . . .—But the Ashanti are Saramacca. . . . " But he would go no further, having spoken only one syllable of the word for people. He became guarded. Yes, there were some Anago people from Africa on this Saramacca River, and Dahomey, and Loango, and Fanti; the Ibo peoples were not on this river. . . . And again he would say no more. Later, when we had changed the subject, he said as if in both gratitude and explanation, "*Na sa-i-'akisi, a tranga poi*—You ask about strong things."

But he would sing into our machine, if we liked. He would sing Kromanti, if we wanted him to do so. "I won't fight your machine," he said, smiling.

"*Anabobi, Anabobi,*
Anabobi, Anabobyo,
Tata Ando.
Anabobi, Ando,
Anabobi,
Tata Adjaini,
Anabobyo
Tata Fa'aku."

"They will understand this in Africa," he said, gravely, and then he moved toward the doorway and stood there

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KUNU

We sat one night talking about the neku vine, which is used to poison the streams for fishing, and the ceremonies attending the discovery of a new one, how the ownership of it is passed on in the female line, and about the songs which are sung to celebrate the finding, and the feast which is given at this time.

"Do you use this poison only to catch fish, or does it have other uses?" we asked guardedly.

"Well, sometimes people use it to commit suicide," one man said. "That is bad. Sometimes a man or a woman will do it to put a kunu on another's family." He went on to tell of a man who lately did this. He had been promised the daughter of a family in this very village when the girl was a small, small child. It happened that the girl's uncles found gold in one of the streams, for which the white man gave them much goods, and now they were big men. Since the girl's children would inherit much wealth, they wanted her to be the principal wife of a man of rank. There were messages back and forth, and council meetings, but the uncles insisted that the girl return the gifts she had received —insisted against the advice of many people. So this *kio*, this young lad, could get his revenge in no other way than by taking his own life, and sending a kunu to the family.

"The next time you come you will probably see the kunu at work. It is always so. Of what use is wealth when the children begin to die? One year the crops are bad, and you have to buy food. One year you go from one obia man to the next to find out why your sister cannot make children. Your money goes. Kunu is a bad thing."

Another day a woman came to us with a comb to sell. She had heard that we were gathering pieces to put into a large house where carvings from Africa were being shown, and she wanted us to have this comb of hers which was made as a betrothal gift by her husband who was now many years dead. It was an old comb with several broken tines and holes bored into it by insects, but the decorated end was still very beautiful, and we were eager to buy it. When we asked her to explain to us the meaning of the design, she

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said, "It is not a woman and a snake, as you might imagine from this," and she indicated one or two lines of the design. "We do not carve the snake in my family. We have a *tchina*—a taboo—against carving snakes, for snakes are our kunu. . . . Years ago my brother went to the French shore and worked for a white man. The white man asked him to kill a snake, and he was afraid, but the white man laughed at him, and because he had a weak ak'a, because his soul was not strong, he killed the snake. If he had told us about it and had sent a piece of the snake, we would have held a burial, as would have been right. But he did not do as he should have done, and so now the snake is not a good spirit for us. We must give it offerings, and dance kunu. It is bad to have a weak soul. My brother did a bad thing, and now I and all my children, and my daughters' children, and their daughters' children on and on will have this kunu."

Farther up the river, in the deep interior, we stopped at the village of Opoku. As we walked to the house of the village head to give him our greetings, we noticed an unusually large house. It was a *liba-wosu*, a house with an upper story, more substantially built than any we passed, and ornamented with elaborate carvings, as were all personal houses of the men. The owner of it, we heard, had been dead eight months. Four more would need to go by before it could be entered. It had been owned by a powerful man, and his belongings were many. We could see some of them through the openings between the slats which formed its walls—an apinti drum, magnificently carved, tall earthen demijohns of rum, boxes, the edge of a metal canister and a lamp. Inside there were guns, and machetes, and native carved paddles, and implements.

Our men joked about the contents of the demijohns as they passed, speculating on the strength of the rum when the containers were opened, and when we asked about the house later—whether, for instance, we could not buy the drum, we were told that the twelve-month interval between a man's dying and the dividing of his property was not yet passed. When the time came, his brothers and sisters

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THE COUNCIL OF THE ELDERS

"*We go asei*," we would be told when the question arose how far we would travel on any given day, or when we urged a reluctant man to sell a ceremonial bench with which he was loath to part. When the answer came back, it came as a unanimous decision of those most concerned. The members of his family had talked over their need for money and weighed that against his personal love for the object he had carved, and most often the decision was against his disposing of it. He cared for it, that meant it pleased his ak'a, his soul, and of what worth was money when it was a question of displeasing his soul, which might begin to trouble him?

"Bak'a, if we cut off our heads and sell them, then if we buy hats, where will we put them?"

So it was in krutu. The lanti, the people, discussed what the bassia had said, as they went apart in small groups. From time to time, a bassia would be called to join one group and then another. What did the chief have in mind when he said this, or that? What did the old men think the consequence would be of the action under discussion? Was it desirable for the village to take a slight, and do nothing at this time? Was it necessary to arrange a compromise, instead of taking the matter into their own hands and beating the members of the offending clan?

After this discussion, each group came back to the assembly united in its stand. If all the groups were agreed, the matter was ended, and the wisdom of the chief and his councilors prevailed. If all disagreed, then it would have been temerity indeed for a chief to attempt to impose his will against the massed dissent. But if there was a lack of agreement, then the long debates would commence. Man after man would summon all his oratory to the argument, and for hours the various factions would speak. In the end, the will of the group would be swayed one way or the other, and a decision reached.

But this was only the procedure in the lowest assembly—that of the village. As men grew older and their sons and

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and so close that our hands, moving about to find a rest, touched its top, and sounded an involuntary rhythm, was an apinti drum. We exclaimed at its beauty, for in form and carving it rivaled the one we had admired in the council house of Granman Yankuso, and we were determined to try to buy it. But we turned our conversation to other things. A stranger in this bush soon learns from the Bush Negroes to broach an important request gently, remembering the cautioning proverb spoken by the chameleon.

We talked of carving, of the white man's coming back some year when the rains were heavy to sit by and watch the men make paddles and benches, so that he might learn, as children learn.

The captain was politely skeptical. It took a Saramacca hand to do this work. But he smiled, "Ma kye, if you have the gods anything is possible."

"That's a fine paddle in the corner."

He brought it out, and we admired it. Would he sell it to us?

"You must ask its owner."

"Didn't you make it, captain?"

"Yes, but it is not mine to sell. I gave it to my wife." He would see, however, if she wanted to sell it. He would himself go and call her.

As he went, he gave us the paddle that we might examine it. We ran our hands over the smooth top, the design, the beveled blade. It was not so tall as the paddles used by the men, nor was its blade so broad as those used in steering the great boats through the rapids. In form, it was quite different from the round-bladed type used by the Indians of the region, for it was slender and came to a sharp point, and at the other end the carving formed a crutch-shaped hold into which the hand fitted.

We studied this carving. Parts of the design had meaning for us because of their realistic treatment. The motifs of others were recognizable to us from explanations we had been given of other carvings. But there were still details

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know you see them. They told you much on the upper river." 532

As he finished speaking, the captain returned with his wife. Excited comments greeted him. 532 123

"The white man here knows *tembe*—carving."

"He knows lizard's teeth design."

"He knew that this was the aboma snake, and the makaka."

The old man was skeptical. "*A so?* Was it true?" Let the Bakra show him.

We repeated the lesson we had just learned to the captain and his wife who owned the paddle. They listened thoughtfully. Then the woman spoke.

"White man, I have used this paddle for many years. I do not like to sell it. But you care for it. You are a man who knows carving. In your country you tell me other men know carving. They will look at it, and see it is beautiful, and they will know it is from the Saramacca. Take it, and pay me what you like." [439]

There were other carvings which we bought—a large rice-carrying tray, and some food stirrers, one of which was especially fine, made as it was of two small paddles with miniature blades, the handles joined by a wooden ring-chain, and all of this carved out of one piece of wood. 532 439

3

Few things on the river seemed to the outsiders more characteristic of the life of the Saramacca people than these carvings which were met with everywhere, however small the village, however poor the home. When the seasonal rains came, men incised their desires on wood, which later told the legend of procreation, or safety on the river, or a curse invoked against a woman if she proved unfaithful; or something of humor, such as a man bidding for a girl's favor, and she refusing him, while up above intertwined were a man and woman, symbolizing the ultimate consummation with the proper suitor. 532

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society, the "Congo" sticks, as they were called here, or the "fighting" sticks. 532

The carvings, however, which we were admiring in the house of the captain of Ma'lobbi were for secular use. The Bush Negro craftsman brought to the ornamenting of his paddles and his canoe seats, to his house posts, and particularly to the door of his treasure house, to his women's combs, and trays, and food stirrers, and clothes beaters all the traditional skill and patience. But the exceptional carver brought also the cunning in his fingers which his gods had given to him and only to few others on the river. Such a man was the captain of Ma'lobbi. Into the traditional designs such a man wove lines for the love of seeing them grow under his hand, for there were always single motifs which the people versed in the symbolism of the art would describe as "beautiful," as having no meaning. Yet with few exceptions the massing of outlines in a unified design bore on fertility. Men and women alone or together, and male and female animals were represented in all but occasional pieces. [501]

The Bush Negro artist was a man of consequence on the river. His companions admired his skill, and the young women were proud to have his handiwork. If he showed his gifts early, he was at an advantage in courting a girl of an influential family. The girl's mother, who shared in the gifts of her daughter's suitor, might be willing to overlook other less advantageous traits in the man or in his family, while the girl's uncles would not be loath to have such a man in their family to teach his art to his sons, who would be their successors. 532 554 584

On several occasions we were permitted to see how very deeply this appreciation of fine carving went. As in the instance of the paddle we had acquired from the wife of the captain of Ma'lobbi, it had happened often that the consent of the woman to sell a given piece was necessary before any trading could take place. Sometimes we traded directly with the woman, sometimes she asked her husband, or her brother, or her son, as the more worldly 439 562 439

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person, to act for her. But always hers was the final word, and often that word when the time came for us to carry away the piece was "No."

"It was made for me by my husband when I was a young girl. Now he sleeps, he is no more. I want to have it," was a statement which ended all bargaining.

Sometimes even after we had paid the woman, and stored the piece away, she returned with the moist coins in her hand, asking for the carved implement.

"Before some man from here will go to the city to buy me a pangi, I may lose the money, or he may lose it on the way. But if the clothes beater is here, I can use it and look at it. I want to keep it."

One vivid incident of bargaining concerned a peanut pounding board which had belonged to the sister of Bassia Anaisi. We were sitting and talking with him and his grandmother, when our eyes rested on his sister's house. From a projection hung a strikingly beautiful piece of carving. The rectangular portion of the board on which the peanuts were crushed was bordered on top and bottom with filigreed carving. It was made of brown-heart wood with inlays of purple-heart. Bassia Anaisi's sister supplemented our guesses of what the designs meant. The top represented a woman's head and headdress. The small brass nails, which made a glistening line in the center of the upper curve, were the cicatrizations on the woman's face.

"Look," said the woman, "she is a woman, but a woman hawk. Here is her neck, and the small cut-out circles here are her breasts, those curves at both ends are the wings. The very small nails are the cicatrizations on the thighs. She is a woman, and she has made herself beautiful. This large rounded portion is her belly, and the smaller one underneath is the *gonu mofo*—the gun's mouth," the last being their image for the vagina. Meeting this from the bottom curving upwards was a half-circle, which represented the male member. At the other end was more embellishment. In the center was a double curve to symbolize the first phase of the moon. Below were two "*Ingi Kodyo*,"

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Indian cudgels, a figure of speech for the buttocks, in this instance those of the woman, and again the male representation. This was edged with a border of deep curves which the woman said was mere ornamentation—scrolls. On another pounding board, however, of this village, a similar border was said to represent the boa constrictor. This board stood on two legs, each the width of the board and about two inches high, and worked in the same cut-through scroll design.

When we suggested that we might care to acquire the board, the woman became apprehensive. She took up the board, and excusing herself, disappeared with it inside her hut.

"No, no," she called from the house, when her brother went to tell her of the offer we had made for it. "I don't want money for it. I like it. I will not sell it."

The sum we offered was modest enough, but not inconsiderable for this deep interior. We increased it, then doubled our original offer. There was still no wavering on the woman's part, but the offer began to interest her family. Such wealth should not be refused. Bassia Anaisi began to urge her in our behalf.

"With this money you can buy from the white man's city a hammock, and several fine cloths. You should not refuse this."

The old woman took up the discussion, then another sister, and a brother. At last the bassia took us aside, and asked us to leave his sister alone with them.

"We will have a krutu, and tomorrow you will hear. She is foolish not to sell. But she cares for the board. It is good, too, when a woman loves what her man has carved for her. We will krutu about it, and you shall hear."

Three days passed before the woman's permission was given to dispose of the piece.

"When they see this, your people will know our men can carve!" she exclaimed in a voice which held as much regret as pride.

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magic on their owners. And there was the Gankwe woman who brought us a paddle representing the bird she called the *apassa*.

"We Gankwe people do not eat the apassa," she had whispered to us when we bought the paddle.

5

In the house of the captain of Ma'lobbi we sat and talked of the carvings of the Saramacca people, and as we talked, they brought us some of the things the men of the village had carved.

"Do all men carve?" we asked the chief.

"Not everyone has the spirit. But every young man tries. If a man is good at hunting, or on the river, then perhaps he can get the things he needs to give his wife from others for what he can give the carver. But it is better that he do these things for his wife himself. The women like it better."

Not everyone could make a boat, he said, nor was everyone able to carve the *pau pau dindu*, the intricate "wood within wood" motifs that made a strip go like a twisted snake in and out, in and out, through a design. And not everyone could make a drum. Like that apinti he had there.

It was the opening for which we had been waiting.

We had been admiring this drum since we had come into his house, we said. We remembered it from the first time on our way up river. It was as fine as any we had seen. Had he made it himself?

He smiled his appreciation.

"It is a fine apinti, ai," agreed several of the men sitting about.

An apinti was one of the things we wanted to take to show the white man. This one, especially, we would like to buy. Would he sell it?

He looked at us for a moment, and then gently shook his head. "To make an apinti is not a small thing. Not everyone can make an apinti. I have worked on it for a long time, and it is not yet finished. This drum I will not sell."

We redoubled our urging.

"White man, do you know what it is to make an apinti—an obia drum?"

A man had to have the proper spirit before he might address the god of the tree from which the drum was to be made. When he had felled the tree, he cut off from the trunk the part he wanted to use and took it to his village. Over it he had to pour the blood of a cock which he sacrificed that the gods might come when the drum called them. The maker had also to provide sweet rum and cassava and eggs. The cassava was eaten by the people, but the eggs were for the spirit of the drum, and only half the sweet rum was drunk—the rest was poured over the wood. When the body of the new drum had been fashioned, the people gathered and sang, but they did not dance, for the head yet remained to be made. A pingo, or a deer, might furnish the skin, but these animals were shot where they had been tracked in the bush, and not offered to the drum. Only chickens were given it. And when the drum was complete, then the maker sang his song alone.

"But the drum is not finished yet. It can be played on, for it has a head, and its spirit has been satisfied. But the carving is not yet done. I have worked on it a long time," he repeated. "I want them to play it for my spirit when I am dead."

A silence fell as he finished. There was nothing more to be said.

"White man, we have sat together in pleasure. You have come to the true, true Saramacca from far away. You have bought the carvings of my people. The apinti drum I cannot sell you. But this stool you like I want you to have."

He took up one of the round-topped benches, with carefully worked sides, and four purple-heart inlays on top, each in the shape of a fowl.

"Take it with you to your white man's country. When you show it, write on a paper that the captain of Ma'lobbi made it."

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Saramacca

"So we see from the Kromanti obia on your arm." Was she, a woman, possessed of the war-like Kromanti spirit? we asked her.

"It is as you see. I am a woman, and I have Kromanti—and it's strong Kromanti."

"We had not heard of women your age getting Kromanti."

"Ai, there are not many, but when my spirit comes, I dance heavy. I dance like the men."

We must have appeared unconvinced, for she became more emphatic.

"What they do in other villages, white man, I do not know. But I have Kromanti, and when the drums speak here at Djamungo I, too, come."

She rose and went into the inner chamber of the house, where the hammocks were hung, and brought out several objects wrapped in old cloth.

"Bayo said I should have obias for you when you came. He said you would pay well for obias. I have these for you."

The trading commenced. There were two small images—"*gadus*" they were called, both crudely carved. One was called Winti Nyamusi. It was a spirit which gave children to women.

"When I come to ask for children, then I take sweet rum in my mouth, and I spray the gadu, then I say, '*Naymusi, da wa' buno mi'i*—O Spirit Naymusi! Give me a fine child.' Then the child will come."

What was the other image, the larger one, with anteater's bristles inserted at sides and top?

"That is a Kromanti obia. It is the Opete spirit, the buzzard. When you take it with you, you must speak to it so. You must say, 'Obia-o, I am carrying you away with me. You must look after me, you must see that my life is spared, O great spirit.' Then you must spray it with rum, but not the sweet rum, not for Kromanti."

There were other obias she had for us, some to be worn about the neck, and others to be worn below the knee.

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and how to cure fever, and fio-fio. He is shown how to make obia medicine for lesions of the skin, and for colds, and for diseases of children. He is taught the protective obias for the woman who conceives, and those which help conception, the obias which keep people safe on the river, and those which guard them in the bush against enemy spirits.

It may be, too, that during this first period of training, the initiate is shown how to trap and treat the snakes from which the snake "cuttee" is made. This cure for snake bite is famous in Suriname among Bush Negroes and whites alike, but the secret of preparing the cuttee is known to the Bush Negroes alone.

While the young man is in training, he may not go with a woman, and there are many more prohibitions which he must observe.

"Not all men can become obia men."

"Does a man need obia in order to have Kromanti?" we asked.

"To have Obia Kromanti, yes. . . . Now do not ask about Kromanti, white man," said Bayo's uncle with a smile. "Only a Kromanti man knows about Kromanti. Do not ask, because I cannot tell you."

5

Men and women constantly drifted to our base camp with carvings for our collection. Many brought us obias. Some of these obias they took from their persons and sold to us, but others were newly made for us, for some of those they themselves wore, they would not part with, whatever the inducement.

"Why do you want my obia, white man?" a Bush Negro asked one day. "Do you want an obia to carry you well to your country? I will make one for you, but do not ask for mine. Mine has kept me in good health. I cannot give away an obia which has served me well. The spirits would be angered."

He returned after a day with one which resembled his own, and as he gave it, he placed it on the upturned palms

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of the white man and blew on it, drawing both his hands lightly over the hands which held the obia. When he had done this, he whispered its tchina.

"Do not let the obia come near a menstruating woman, and do not eat the meat of the crab."

Types of obias varied. Some were of fiber twisted into a cord and woven into bands to fit an arm or a leg, some were worn around the neck, and ended with a few cowries and a bell or a black sack with cowries sewn on them or some bristles and a brilliant bit of a parrot's feather. There were also the plain bands of iron, the Kromanti obias worn by men.

One of the most interesting obias was the coffin obia. It was not to be worn casually, as were all the others we had heretofore acquired. When our cook saw this one he paled.

"Mi Gado," he cried, and then turned to the English at his command to give us a warning which would not be understood by those who stood near. "What you got there? Put that away! You wan' fo' die?" Nor would he come near it until it was well out of sight.

It was, we saw, best hidden, if we wanted to continue our course up the river.

The man who had sold it had himself impressed us with its potency. "This obia is strong. . . . Look, it is made of cedar, the same wood from which we make the big coffins, and it is wrapped in the cloth we use to cover the coffin in which the dead man lies. Now that you have the power which is in the obia, I can tell you that the black on it is the soot from the fire, the white is pemba, and the inside ring is woven from the maripa palm. It will carry you well on the river. Nothing can harm you when you already carry your coffin with you."

The logic of his last remark was not so convincing to the whites as it was to the obia man, but it seemed unwise to question him about it.

"To keep it strong, you must spray it with rum twice a month. When the moon is full you must do it, and again

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789 before the new moon comes, and when you do this, you
798 must say,
439

"*Obia-o,*
Your spirit must stay,
[539] *Your power must not leave this.*
Do not go elsewhere,
Do not become defiled."

789 There was the obia on which Bayo had lavished all the
798 magic he could command so that his friends might be safe in the bush. From the sacred grass known as *s'a*—the same grass from which the woven ceremonial dancing skirts are made here on the river—he made several long lengths of twine. These he wove into a square which later became the pendant of this neck obia. On this, as a base, he sewed two cowries facing each other, and in the middle of the fringed border of this pendant he fastened a bit of a macaw's feather, blue and orange in color.

The twisted cord about the neck had several knots in it where the cord met the pendant. Tying is the symbol of attaching, of binding, so that if an invocation was uttered in the making of these knots, and the twine was then drawn taut, the power was certain to be lodged inside the knots. Then, too, knots form links, and links, whether they be in a metal chain or in fiber or wood, symbolize union, and any object or ornament with links is, therefore, much valued in bush and in town. A linked chain is a favorite
[705] gift to please the akra, the soul, among the coastal Negroes.
A woman who wishes to attach her man to her will rise at
[832] night noiselessly and will knot a hair from the man's head three times, speaking her invocation. In the bush few obias are found which do not have several knots in them.

In his exuberance Bayo placed so many prohibitions on this finely woven obia, that we asked him if he could not nullify some of them.

"For very strong obias, we have many tchina. It is best
784 so, because no one who wants to harm you will guess all
789 of them and so succeed in robbing the obia of its power.

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the space where the snake was modeled, but never touching it.

The man who was explaining the bench to us pointed once more to the snake. "It is not always lifeless as you see it here," he said.

When the snake came to life, trouble was brewing. It turned red, the color of blood, and all who came into the Kromanti house and saw it were warned of danger.

"How does the snake know when to come to life?"

"It is Agbo, the guard, who tells the snake. When she tells him there is trouble, he turns red, and then we know."

Immunity as well as knowledge was afforded by the magical powers of this stool and its snake and the Kromanti Mama.

"A man who has Kromanti sits down on the stool, and puts Agbo on his head, and when he has done that, nothing can harm him."

Thus is safety attained. But this only comes if the image has been propitiated by the Kromanti men. Rum, not of the sweet kind, must be offered it and prayers transmitted to its spirit on the drum which Kromanti recognizes—the apinti. If this is done, the Kromanti Mama will not lose its power, and the snake will continue to turn the warning color when danger threatens, and the bench will give protection to the men who have the Kromanti obia.

4

Not long after we had entered the bush we saw our first Kromanti dance. The people of several neighboring villages came to our base camp to dance for us. They asked, "Will you be afraid if the dancing brings Kromanti?" We told them we should welcome whatever spirits came.

Late that afternoon canoes brought people to our encampment for the festivities. Some, with an eye to trade, had brought carvings and obias, and, as we sat and talked with them about what should be given for the pieces they offered us, we could watch the dance outside our open hut.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

INTRODUCTION

I FIRST met the Djukas in St. Laurent, which is the prison port of French Guiana, and the centre of the penitentiary system which is popularly known as the Devil's Island Penal Colony.

The Djukas come in to St. Laurent from the jungle. They come to trade jungle rubber and timber for bright beads and gunpowder and fish-hooks and the brilliant lengths of calico which they use as loin-cloths. When they have made their purchases they often pause on their way back to the canoes which they have left moored at the bank of the wide copper-coloured river which separates French from Dutch Guiana. They pause outside the penitentiary gates and stare at the French convicts as they are marched out to the hard labour which is part of their prison sentence.

And I could have had no more dramatic introduction than this to the wild free Djukas of the Guiana jungle.

The convicts march with the listless feet of diseased, undernourished, hopeless men. They are sad and silent. The Djukas stand erect, confident, and free. In the primitive communism of their forest life, they recognize no masters. It is in every Djuka's power to live as well as does every other Djuka. There is just enough social organization to keep order in the tribe and no more. There are no anarchists among them. No

[P. viii is blank]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

184 good deal of French patois. Most of the people also speak a
619 fluent and, at times, a good French, which they have learned from the freed convicts, the libérés, of the largest French prison colonies in Guiana at St. Laurent, situated about forty miles from the mouth of the Marowyne River. Some of the
439 Negroes of this tribe, as well as some of the Aucaners, sometimes visit St. Laurent for purposes of barter and trade. They also occasionally aid the French in transporting loads in their canoes up to the remaining placer mine.

648 These Bush Negroes have seen thousands of white convicts and libérés. They have seen white men under the most degrading conditions possible to human existence on this planet. They have seen them shot down in the street. They have seen them rummaging in cans of tropical garbage that even a dog would shun, or escaping through the jungles, simply starving, hunted animals. Their point of view in regard to this may be summarized in the answer received when the question was put to one Boni as to what he thought of the Penal Colony; he said: *"Francie mong sung go dede"*—"Frenchmen soon die."

But just across the river from St. Laurent is the little settlement of Albina and the *Doocie mong* (Dutchmen). The Dutch have armed soldiers there so that the escaping libérés cannot cross.

322 As among the other tribes, the Boni are adept in the carving of wood. They make the usual kinds of highly decorated implements, such as large combs, pot stirrers, food trays carved out of sections of a tree trunk. The door posts and façades of their huts are often elaborately carved

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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gaining possession of other fugitives. It is said that, until recently, actual war prevailed among the tribes because some Saramaccaners invaded the Boni and Aucaner districts, poaching on their lumbering, hunting, fishing, and balata rights. The punishment today for any Bush Negro found poaching in another district is a healthy beating with canoe paddles and fists, after which he is warned not to repeat the offence.

With the Indians of Surinam the Bush Negroes have little commerce or intercourse. These aborigines belong principally to three American tribes, the Carib, Acaway, and Arawak. They and the Djukas mutually look down on each other, but in our opinion the latter are intellectually the superior. Indian and Djuka villages are separate; very little trading occurs between them. On the Marowyne, Tapanahoni, and Lawa Rivers, however, the Negroes occupy a strategic position on the middle rivers, so that Indians from their remote villages along the upper river must pass by Bush Negro towns on their way downstream to trade at the white settlement of Albina, near the mouth of the Marowyne. The Djukas tell the Indians that the white men in Albina practise cannibalism. Rather than run the risk of trading with cannibals, the Indians barter their stuff in the Bush Negro towns. By this crafty arrangement, the Negroes obtain bead and feather work in exchange for tobacco and for machetes.

The Indians on the other rivers do not share this superstition concerning the white man's cannibalism. None of the Indian tribes mingle with the Djukas other than for the pur-

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

one woman said: "He gave me this piece when we were first married. I won't part with it now." Usually an elaborate parley is necessary. The women are undecided whether to sell or not. They laugh, giggle, put their finger coyly in their mouths, joke bashfully with bystanders, and cannot make up their minds as to the price. They never know how much to ask for a piece. Sometimes they will mention a preposterous figure, hoping like a naïve child that the strange bahkra will pay that much. But on such occasions a rebuke will make them more reasonable. Once an arrogant witch doctor intervened in a transaction with a Bush Negro woman, demanding angrily that she receive an exorbitant payment. His anger was squelched with a few sharp words, and, contrite, he sat up all night to carve an ornate implement to present to the bahkra as a peace-offering. Cunning Adjobo, the medicine man!

The Bush Negro implements are carved out of jungle wood. Some are made of lignum vitæ, the hardest wood known. A few of them are made of soft wood, light and spongy, but these are not popular. The small paddles are used for stirring in the cooking pots, and the combs are actually used for the hair. They are never worn as personal ornaments, and when not in use are hung up on the walls of the hut. The utensils are all made with common trade jackknives and compasses which are used as dividers. It is principally with these dividers that the serpentine motifs are executed. After the carving is finished the piece is smoothed off by rubbing it with matted grass and river

2; Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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African comb, from the region of Nigeria, is shown on page 175. It can be seen that the wooden comb is not a Djuka invention, as every characteristic of the Bush Negro pieces can be found on this West African piece, except the ornamental piercing.

The arts of weaving and basketry are not as highly developed among the Djukas as is the carving of wooden implements. The Bush Negroes do not weave the cotton cloth they wear. It is obtained, instead, by trading at the white settlements. The only weaving among them consists of cotton leg and arm bands—things that do not count for much so far as industry is concerned, but which expand the wearer's ego and add enormously to his or her self-esteem. The basketry of the Djukas, like the weaving, is simple and competent. Unornamented circular baskets, varying in size from a foot to a yard in diameter, can be seen in all the villages. They are used for carrying yams, rice, and foodstuffs generally. The finest basket work does not occur in these baskets, however, but in the cassava squeezers, those elongated tubes for producing cassava flour. These are beautifully woven of uniform rattan, and decorated with darker strips to form a simple pattern near each end. The finished product is an admirable piece of work, of which the owner must indeed be proud.

Pottery is made by the Djukas for utilitarian purposes only, and the solid black, absolutely undecorated clay ware has no particular element of beauty. The pots are black, stolid, and unimaginative. They are simply necessities.

But when the necessities of life have been provided for,

Djuka

/2 cont./

114 Much wood was ordered by me, and all that I received was
● 439 paid for according to the actual value and in accordance with a concluded agreement.

123 I lent several of them money, in spite of already having been misled and cheated by them frequently, and continued to treat them amicably, to give them articles of clothing, and, indeed, sometimes for bad wood, which they tried to force upon me among the good pieces, even though I noticed this, I nonetheless continued to pay them decently just as for good wood, whereby I made them realize that I wanted to do business in an accomodating way.

So I learned more and more of their way of life, customs, and habits, respected these in everything, and finally succeeded in leading them back from various bad habits and shortcomings and to observe a more honest way of dealing with me. I was even able to bring it about so that I enjoyed a blind trust and in return was able to give my complete trust to some.

114 Since the beginning of 1857 I have been the owner of a
439 sawmill with which the previous owner could do little or nothing because he always lacked the logs needed for the sawing of boards, whereas I, on the other hand, receive so much wood from the Bush Negroes that it is frequently too much for me.

123 Many of them who are not even my regular workmen refuse
439 to sell their wood on the plantations and bring it all the way to my sawmill located near the town, because, so they contend, they also want to share in the privileges which the other Bush Negroes enjoy in accordance with the agreement concluded with me.

123 Most of the Bush Negroes know me, if not in person, at least by name.

I have also had to promise them that I will bring up my son /3/ so that later he will be able to take my place and deal with their descendants in the same manner as I am now doing with them, while they, too, drill their children to conduct themselves toward my son as the parents do toward me. In this way they want to make any split between my family and theirs impossible, even in the future.

/11 cont./

286 garments /pandjes/ or articles of dress and other knitted goods.
[413] They also know how to make very attractive hammocks of cotton.

Chapter VII

Food, Drinks, Delicacies, and so forth.

262 Their daily food is mainly rice and cassava (1) bread which
[252]

1. Sweet cassava, the farina from the root of the Janipha manihot, not to be confused with Jatropha manihot, which gives the bitter cassava, which, however much is removed by boiling and continued washing, contains a very poisonous component.

is baked on an iron plate and provides a tasty food that can be
[241] kept for a long time. During the dry season, the months of September, October, and November, the ground also supplies them with a very mealy and tasty tuber called nappi (2); throughout the year,

2. Dioscorea sativa and Dioscorea alata L.

however, they grow yams, sweet potatoes (3), tayers (4), and cassava.

3. Convolvulus batatas L. and Batatas edulis Choisy.

4. Root from Arum esculentum.

● [439] They have bananas only from time to time, whenever they exchange them on plantations for squared wood, which they pur-
[433] posely work for this exchange. They know how to obtain wild game
[263] and fish in great quantities; salt is an article greatly in demand.

/11 cont./

252 They always prepare their food with much native pepper (5)

5. All Capsicum species.

and in their soup or blaf cook various forest greens (6), which they

6. Kraroe, kalalve from the Amarantus oleraceus, taja leaves from an Arum species.

then eat with finely pounded bananas (called afoefoe) or else with cassava bread or rice dipped into it.

412 They make their spoons from a long strip of the calabash rind.

262 They are great lovers of pinda (7), a kind of groundnut, from

7. Arachis hypogoea L.

which they make various delicacies.

[439] They are particularly fond of bacon and buy it whenever they are in town, salted and smoked; they frequently take barrels of it with them into the bush and are very sparing with it.

/12/ They buy flour or meal only when they have had a bad rice harvest.

273 As drink they use rum or dram, and sometimes they make [439] from the juice of the sugar cane, which they acquire on plantations, a kind of fermented drink which they use especially at festivals. They prefer gin and beer to wine, of which they are no great lovers. The women are very fond of liqueur.

276 Many men and women smoke American tobacco in short clay pipes. The taking of snuff is a passionate habit among some.

Chapter VIII

Festivals, Games, Gods

796 They do not have fixed times for the veneration of their gods,

273 and they do this only then when they are amply supplied with strong drink and want to have a gay time for three or four days.

/28 cont./

304 so much time on the desire for this kind of ostentation. When the incisions become faint through time and the growing of the skin, they are raised again by renewed carving.

/29/

Chapter XX

The Attitude toward Europeans and the Latter's Treatment of Them

461 The Bush Negroes begin to think of work when they have
313 little strong drink, powder, and lead left on hand; they leave their
439 camp and go to the work places where they are accustomed to felling trees and working these into squared timber, which they then tie together into rafts and float down the rivers in order to sell it on the plantations and at Paramaribo.

439 Some among them, especially the Saramaccaners, bring korjalen, pinda nuts (1), and groundnuts and Tonka beans (2) to

1. Arachis hypogoea L.

2. The fruit of the Dipteryx.

439 the part of the colony inhabited by Europeans; they usually exchange
648 all this for strong drink. It is to be lamented that their trade with the Whites is frequently linked with unpleasantnesses. Generally the latter treat them with contempt. This takes place all too frequently on the plantations in particular, whereby naturally fear and dissatisfaction arise among the Bush Negroes against the Whites; it is therefore not surprising that, after having been repeatedly cheated out of their fair rights, driven by suspicion and a desire for revenge, they in turn frequently try to deceive the Europeans.

In order to make clear their attitude toward the Europeans, I shall cite some proceedings which became known to me in earlier years and which even now have not completely ceased in the colony,

/29 cont./

439 Thus it is known to me that they have gone to one or another plantation in order to sell timber, which they tie to their korjalen or canoes after having made it into rafts with bush ropes (tough liana stalks), and have misled the Europeans in a scandalous manner.

[283] They make their squared timber into rafts in the following manner. Four thick strong round timbers are laid crosswise and tied together, two above and two under the korjaal; the timber is pushed in between these and fastened, so that the whole thing forms a firm long rectangle with the korjaal in the middle /30/ with which they make long journeys from the upper to the lower rivers. This timber that is made into rafts and carried along by the korjaal is called kokroko; they tie light and floating wood to long beams with bush rope (called boessitetei) (1); thus tied to the

1. From the copaiva.

heavy wood they drag it along down the river.

Chapter XXI

Understanding among Themselves

114 Not long ago I found myself among them on the river
133 Upper Commewijne on the Tempati (a branch of the river named, on the left going upstream; this branch runs into the mountains, which are reported as ruddle mountains /roodenberg/.

114 Residing among them, I made many attempts to induce
648 them to track down those in hiding who did not belong to their tribes and fugitives of a later time, and to make known to them that by governmental decree in the course of the year 1863, before the emancipation, a general amnesty regarding them had been issued, so that they could return to their former dwelling places without fear of punishment. The reason that induced me to acquaint them with this was that I saw in the return of these persons

/31 cont./

202 be mentioned in particular the man who caused so much of a stir,
648 Broos, chief of a camp of persons in hiding behind the plantation Rac a Rac, who came back followed by many.

I must confess that I have never seen this chief and was not involved in this event in any way; the question is, however, whether this Broos and his followers came back of their own accord, or whether they returned without fear of the Whites because of the reassuring signs set up at my request.

That the Bush Negroes attached to me complied with my request by the placing of /32/ signs is not to be doubted, but what outcome resulted from it cannot be said with certainty.

Chapter XXII

Deception Practiced toward Them

114 I said a few words in Chapter XX and earlier about the
648 deceptions that the Whites practiced with regard to the Bush Negroes. I was at first diffident about communicating the unvarnished truth about this. Since, however, this is not reported by me as being generally applicable, because, as in all things, here, too, favorable exceptions exist, I therefore regard it as my duty to make my experience known.

186 The Bush Negroes, it cannot be denied, as the result
648 of the manifold deceptions that they have experienced from the Europeans and other free inhabitants of this colony, have developed an aversion toward them. They therefore oppose deception with deception, and trick with trick.

● 439 It has become apparent to me that many of them, when
648 they arrive with timber rafts at the plantations in order to sell the timber, after having been deceived several times, make use of all kinds of tricks in order in their turn to deceive the Europeans. I leave now to one side the question as to which of the two parties is the principal or initiating cause and has the greater responsibility in these fraudulent transactions. When a family of Bush Negroes

/32 cont./ When a family of Bush Negroes
439 lands at a plantation with rafts of timber, the man goes on land,
437 but according to old plantation custom, may not go farther than up to the residence of the overseer, who inquires about the species and the prices per foot (the prices vary a great deal depending on quality and thickness). As a rule he is not satisfied with the asking price and bargains until the seller contents himself with 40 cents for timber of 64.

When the sale has been concluded, the overseer permits the timber raft to be brought into the plantation creek, which is then subsequently, after the conclusion of the work in the fields, hauled to shore in the evening with the help of the Negroes of the plantation.

The following morning the timber is inspected and measured, and ordinarily, no matter how good the timber is or how fully it /33/ agrees with the description given by the seller, many faults are found, and the original offer is brought down to 32 or 24 cents a foot.

What must the poor Bush Negro do now? To take the timber back is difficult, a sheer impossibility, for, since he is ordinarily there with his wife and a few children, they are too few in number to haul the large pieces 25 to 40 feet long and 7/7 to 10/10 thumbs wide from the shore into the water again. He is thus entirely dependent upon the good will and the help of the overseer and the field workers of the plantation. To leave it there is equally difficult, for quite possibly, if he returns with some of his fellow tribesmen to help, he is not permitted to haul the timber off. He thus accepts the low offer. But with that the deceptions are not yet at an end. The agreement now being concluded for good, the measuring is done next, and it is truly not an unusual phenomenon that a measure of six feet, which the Bush Negro is told has a length of only five feet, is used for this purpose.

These frauds of a more or less punishable sort, alas, take place all too frequently, and during my five years of plantation life I was an eyewitness to them several times. Is it thus to be wondered at that these people, after having been repeatedly defrauded, should likewise try to do so to the Whites.

/33 cont./

439 When, for instance, the Bush Negro has cut down a
437 tree deep in the forest and discovers that it is almost hollow on
313 the inside, then he works it, this defect notwithstanding, into a
186 squared log, taking care to make the visible cavities above and below invisible by hammering wooden pins into it. After that he takes clay and mud and is able to make every trace disappear, a fraud which is thus rarely discovered before a piece is sawed off the log.

Also they practice a great deal of deception by unloading on the buyer as good stuff various qualities of timber of great and little value, but which resemble each other, for instance, by selling a low quality black kabbes (1) for brown hardwood (2),

1. Andira retusa H. B. K.

2. Andira called wassila among the Arrawakken /Arawak/ Indians.

two varieties which can be distinguished only by timber experts.

/34/ If they have worked timber that on one side is already somewhat rotten, or is worm-eaten or split, then they know how to place it in such a way in their rafts that the good side lies upward, a deception that can be discovered only when it has been hauled ashore and one becomes aware of it by turning each piece around and inspecting it carefully.

186 If it is possible to steal something from the Whites,
648 they will not fail to do so. They are also guilty of lying and give themselves the names of those who still possess the confidence of the Whites, which they can do with impunity because the similarity of their coloring and facial features makes it extremely difficult for the Whites to recognize them after an absence.

[829] This repeated trickery has accordingly made the Whites declare them to be scoundrels and liars, but the Bush Negroes, although they do not do so openly, say the same of them and
577 regard themselves as much more trustworthy and honest. That they do this with some appearance of justice cannot be denied; after

/145 cont./

243 Rice (alésie).

Next to cassava rice is an important auxiliary crop. One sows the rice broadcast with the hand among the other crops and tjaps (6) the seed under lightly. The sowing time falls in Decem-

6. To tjap = to loosen the ground with a hoe.

ber to February or March. In the fourth month the rice is mature. [132] The harvest time therefore falls in the long rainy season from May to July (somewhat later on the Surinam River). Only the ears are cut off, and these are dried in the sun on the grounds or in the villages. Only dry-land rice is cultivated but in many varieties, such as:

kasiwini, the best kind, with long white grains;
ajengena, with short fine grains, with pounding produces a beautiful white rice;
abalahede, with flat, round grain;
witti-alesie or paramakka-alesie, slightly colored in the ear;
lebi (redi) -- alesie, yellow as paddy, grows also in swampy places;
aloeloe or loeloe, sends out shoots quickly, has a good grain;
pindé-alesie, grain speckled on the outside;
asinkini, variety with long grain, is often planted.

/146/ Still other varieties are: rexora, saka, mabosoe, mooidà, sika-sirie, bakaté-saka, dendelei, mooimama, wittifang, skati, blakatère, mesiti, pikienloeloe, trampoeloekoe.

[251] The Bush Negroes store the rice in the ears and thresh the paddy with the feet by treading on it after it has been dried on 252 zinc sheets or on sacks. The paddy is pounded in the matta whenever it is needed for a meal. Unpolished silver-pellicle rice /zilvervlies-rijst/ is thus eaten, and this is boiled in the usual 262 manner together with meat or fish. With a good harvest one has rice throughout the year until the following harvest, but frequently [439] the quantity is sufficient for only a few months. In case of a shortage milled rice is purchased from the shops along the Marowijne.

B R 137 241 /512 cont./

The region is entirely covered by equatorial forest which the inhabitants clear for their crops, practicing a shifting agriculture on burned-over land.

B R 311 504 968

Life is closely tied to the river, on the edge of which are established villages and crops. They scarcely move except by water. Everybody, man, woman, or child, has his pirogue, and the children learn to paddle at the same time that they learn to walk.

B R 433

The principal activities of the two populations are agriculture, fishing, and canoeing.

B R 262

There is scarcely any difference between the dietary resources of the Indians and the Boni. The principal portion is manioc, eaten in the form of cassave (flat cakes cooked on a plate) or of couac (roasted and granulated flour). Then come tubers, yams, dasheens, "Carib cabbage" /taro/ and sweet potatoes, bananas and plantains. The Boni in addition plant mountain rice, from which the yield is small; in return, they eat fewer bananas.

B [241]

R [226]

The protein ration is furnished essentially by fish, eaten fresh or smoked. The Indians, skillful fishermen, never lack them. Game furnishes a less regular, but important resource.

B R [231] [439]

Animal husbandry, confined to a few chickens raised mainly to sell, represents only an insignificant part of the diet.

The fat from fish and from animals killed while hunting constitutes the principal portion of lipides. The Boni use in addition, for preparing their meals, a small quantity of maripa palm oil.

Vitamins come from fruit (papaya, pineapple, mangoes), which the Indians eat in greater abundance than the Blacks, from wild spinach, rich in Vitamin A, and palm nuts (awara and caumou), eaten in great abundance during the rainy season.

B R 146

Neither of the two populations is undernourished. The Indians might have been so temporarily during epidemics, when the adults, having been sick for a long time, were unable to clear sufficient land. But they can supplement an inadequate harvest with a great variety of wild foods that can be gathered.

The diet seems poor in mineral elements and especially in calcium. Traces of rachitis are noticeable among some of the Indian children.

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601 They continue to use the terms soagi, pay, may even after the break-up of a marriage, so that they are in frequent usage. As for the woman herself, they say sa So-and-so in speaking to her, as to a sister.

581 Marriage. The conceptions of the Refugee Blacks on this subject are remarkable. Marriage in the African sense of the term, understood as a contract between two groups of relatives, does not exist among them. The union of the man and woman does not involve any sort of contract between their groups of relatives and consequently entails no matrimonial compensation. /35/ The Refugee Blacks are the only African Negro population to our knowledge whose customs do not involve any form of "dowry" either in money or in kind.

582 Family life in the sense that we understand it does not exist; as we shall see further on, marriage is forbidden between people of the same lineage, which implies that the husband and wife live in different villages. The man builds a house for his wife in her native village, but he does not come to live with her; he makes visits of several days to her as to his other wives, in the course of which he furnishes her with the imported objects (salt, kerosene, cloth, etc.) she needs, lends her his aid for heavy chores, while, for her part, she turns over to him the products of the clearing. The rest of the time he lives as a bachelor in his mother's village where he builds his own house. If he is very attached to his wife, he can come to reside with her and can even succeed without great difficulty in bringing her to live in his own village; but few couples take advantage of this option, for the man and wife prize their independence above everything else.

593 The life of the man and of the wife remain entirely separate and their union has more the character of a temporary association founded on material interests than that of a marriage; the family life of each one remains entirely centered around his or her matrilineage.

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No form of trade (1) is traditionally observed among them,

1. Since 1954, one of them, enriched by boat transport, set up a food business at Kotika, but this is a man more than half "creolized" and one who established himself in the midst of Creoles.

this activity being for them manifestly tied to the idea of the exploitation of others; there is not even any market in the villages. 433 Each person produces, or finds among the people of his own lineage, 439 what food he needs; as for imported objects, the Boni buy them in the course of their trips from the coast traders. That plague of 591 African societies, pseudo-trade or parasitism, is unknown to the [735] Refugee Blacks. Just as one meets among them neither ragamuffins nor beggars, one perceives nothing nasty or low in their social relations.

In their collective life there is something aboveboard, clean, which strikes one on first meeting them and which one does not tire of admiring, the further one penetrates into the functioning of their institutions.

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593 342 461 [198] Nothing marks better the small place the conjugal bond has in a man's life; imagine the torture which this forced living and crowding together represent for each of these women! The Boni of today, much richer than their ancestors and better equipped with tools, are singularly lazier in building houses; no longer is anyone seen to sculpture and decorate the façades lovingly; when a man, after many recriminations, decides to build a house for his wife, he is content most of the time now with a simple shelter with plaited walls, which does not require 30 days work.

595 As we have said, each man may take as many wives as he wishes, on condition that he can supply their needs; but in practice the maintenance of a household is so heavy a load that most men have only one or two wives; only one to our knowledge has three. 593 [461] [556] [454] In fact, it is contrary to custom to free oneself by paying for work which one must do for one's wife. We have never heard it said that a rich man (many of them have hundreds of thousands of francs in savings) paid money in place of a piece of work, or paid someone to do it for him. [439] The furnishing of imported objects is particularly burdensome, especially cloth, kitchen utensils (Boni women are infatuated with aluminum [511] objects), and occasionally jewels. The Boni conceded in 1958 that the maintenance of a wife amounted to 30 to 40 thousand [434] francs a year at least. If one considers that a hard-working man [511] earned about 120,000 francs a year, that he spent 30 to 40 [695] thousand francs a year for himself, that he often had /151/ in addition to provide for the needs of his aged parents and share the expenses of the festivals of the lineage, one sees that he could not have more than two wives at the same time. As for [434] less hard-working men, who have no more than 60 to 80 thousand [511] francs a year in ready money, they have a great deal of trouble [586] in facing the maintenance of a single household, and many divorces have no other cause.

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/165 cont./ There may be 126 camisas (1) and

1. Pieces of cotton goods about 1.10 x 0.75 meters. These cloths are manufactured in Holland especially for the Refugee Black clientele.

15 large pieces of cloth. About 30 camisas have been taken from the dead woman's trunk; the others have been given by the people present, the near relatives each giving several, the other relatives only one.

Their work finished, the kisimɛ burn the shavings and
[783] scraps of board. They pass their tools through a flame to purify them of the stains of death. /166/

About 3:00 P.M. the coffin is brought into the mortuary shed by the kisimɛ. The kisimɛ, who have complete charge of this phase of the obsequies, count the pieces of cloth and divide them up. One part will be used for their pay, others for the pay of the gravediggers. Fifteen pieces of cloth and about
[765] ten ordinary camisas will be placed in the coffin. The rest will be used for clothing the widower who, during the whole period of mourning, will thus remain symbolically dependent upon the dead person; if there are any left over, they are distributed to the members of the dead person's lineage.

Placing in the Coffin. About three o'clock four of the
[292] kisimɛ take their places beside the coffin; they gird their loins with a camisa as the Refugee Blacks always do before carrying out a religious act. In the greatest silence they spread out the 15 large pieces of cloth inside the coffin, allowing them to fall to the ground at right and left. Next, two of them lift up the body while the others slip the coffin underneath (for the whole duration of the burial ceremonies, the body must remain at the exact place where it was put down. The coffin does not rest directly on the ground but is put on a mat through the

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765 [769] [778] [613] After three months, an offering is made at the fraga tiki of the dead person's lineage, setting forth how much her spouse has respected her memory and asking permission to lighten the manifestations of his sorrow. The mourning is then lightened, but the man in mourning continues to wear a bandeau around his head or at the very least an old beret.

765 461 [613] During the first months the man in mourning has no other responsibility than to hunt and fish at the order of the dead woman's lineage. He does his own cooking with the food given to him; he cuts a clearing for his mother-in-law or another woman of the deceased's relatives, who will farm it with him.

[431] Next, he receives the order to go and earn the money necessary for the sizable contribution he must bring to the festival of the lifting of mourning. During the entire duration of the mourning he must report on his work and moves.

765 [606] When the end of mourning approaches, he must do a job for the benefit of his mother-in-law, generally redoing the roof of her house or building a boat for her.

[626] These arrangements do not involve any material sanction whatever. Like the rest of the social life of the Refugee Blacks, they rest entirely upon fear of a suprahuman sanction.

[589] After the lifting of mourning, the person in mourning may remarry without further delay.

765 768 [562] State of widows and co-wives of a widower. The state of a woman in mourning is practically identical to that of a widower. She lives for the duration of mourning in her deceased husband's house under the surveillance of his near relatives on the maternal side. The dead man's lineage lends her all the objects she needs and furnishes the imported commodities (salt, kerosene, soap) that she uses. On the other hand, she may freely use the produce of the clearing that her husband had cut for her, since it is taken for granted that these products are the exclusive property of the wife.

[613] [439]

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787 very serious question, the asker contents himself with going to interrogate a divinity in which he has confidence. If, when put to the test, the advice turns out to be bad, he goes to consult others and if he obtains the same advice from two different directions, he stops there. If not, he appeals to the elders of [888] his village to bring into play the processes of divination which [791] they alone know.

[428] A second category of divinatory procedures consists in the use of "remedies," whose origin is unknown and which are transmitted like a personal belonging.

The process reputed to be the surest, in which everybody [824] has confidence, is called pusu. The instrument is composed simply of a rope made of fibers of the Mauritia (2) palm tree

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2. Palm tree which grows in the coastal savannas and whose fibers are bought from the Galibi Indians. The word pusu, like gita, kandu, mula, is of Congolese origin. In Kikongo, mpuusu = raffia palm tree.

which has been dipped in an infusion of herbs; it is stretched horizontally between two stakes. The elder brings near it a machete blade heated red-hot, at the same time asking the question. If the answer is positive, the rope is cut when the iron has scarcely touched it. If the answer is no, they state that the red-hot iron remains in contact with the rope for an appreciable length of time without the rope's being cut.

They will say for example: ɛfu na Ampuku siki X, a how a 'ã mu do: fosi a kɔti: If it is an Ampuku which is making X sick, the machete must cut (the rope) before (even) reaching it.

/293 cont./

175 with their allies. The sites of
648 their villages, marked on Coudreau's
727 map (1888) are in immediate proximity
to those of former Oayana villages.

175 relations must have been created rapidly and in a very natural
648 fashion. The grand man of the Boni is in a way the suzerain of
[643] the Indian chiefs; this situation was not imposed by force; it
results from the privileged situation of the Boni on the river,
which until recent times obliged the Indians to deal through them
in order to trade with the outside world.

Although the Boni took advantage of this situation in days gone by to impose arbitrary rates of exchange upon the Indians, this relation must not be imagined as the exploitation of con-
648 quered by conqueror. It is based on the absolute respect of each
829 group for the beliefs and social structure of the other, and an activity for each befitting its inclination. The proverb says:
•[439] "To the Boni the river, to the Indians the forest." Thus it is that the Boni traditionally buy arrows from the Indians, while the latter buy paddles from them; the meaning of this symobl is perfectly understood by both.

648 Marriages between the two groups, without being for-
582 bidden, are regarded as contrary to custom (2).

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2. The marriage of Grand Man Awensay to an Indian woman about 1915 was inspired by complex motives. Toward the end of his life, Awensay could no longer stand the Boni, his imperious personality putting up badly with their individualism and their taste for discussion. He had established the Indian country a farming habitation in which he lived nearly all

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/293 cont./ year; by taking an Indian woman as his wife he apparently sought to humiliate his subjects.

Awensay's children and grandchildren were all dead in 1957 except for two women, both sterile. There has been no other case of marriage between Boni and Indians.

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439 /294/ In practice, the basis for commercial exchanges is the following: the Indians furnish hammocks, and above all dogs trained for hunting, to which great value is attached. The Boni furnish boats. In days gone by they also brought imported objects, machetes, axes, and beads, but this form of trade has disappeared since the Indians have had the possibility of getting supplies from the Europeans.

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648 Several observers, coming after Coudreau (1890) and Grébert (1937) in particular, have expressed the opinion that these relations were founded on fear and that the Boni, utilizing mysterious means of pressure, used to oppress the Indians.

After seven missions spent in contact with both, we affirm that these assertions are without foundation. On the contrary, one can only admire the way in which these primitive groups have been able to create loyal and trusting relations with one another. The Indians and Boni who have worked with us have always shown themselves happy to be together. To realize this, it was sufficient to hear the animated conversations they used to have in the evening around the campfires about their respective families, the events which took place in their villages, fishing, or hunting.